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SUBJECT: FRENCH JIU AND FAO CANDIDATES

REF: STATE 105347 (NOTAL)

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: France believes their candidate to the United Nations' Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), Gerard Biraud, is well qualified; he is the JIU's current President. France also hopes the United States will support its candidate for the Independent President of the FAO Council, Luc Guyau even though that election is contested by a U.K. candidate. Guyau is President of France's Chambers of Agriculture and is a member of France's Economic and Social Council, but, in Post's opinion, has a record of promoting protectionist measures and whose management credentials deserve scrutiny. END SUMMARY.

#### JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

12. (SBU) On October 21, MFA Deputy Director for International Organizations, Emmanuel Cocher, asserted that France's candidate to the United Nations' Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), Gerard Biraud, is well-qualified based on the criteria requested in reftel demarche. Cocher noted that Biraud is, in fact, seeking reelection to the JIU, and was elected by the other members to serve as the current President of the organization. He noted that Biraud is a former MFA official and is "well and favorably known."

13. (SBU) France has been actively lobbying for Biraud and Cocher believes the Department has already been demarched by the French Embassy in Washington. Cocher explained that for most countries (though not the U.S.) French ambassadors were instructed to lobby at the Minister level. Cocher provided Poloff with copies of the note verbal and CV for Biraud that are being shared in capitals. [Note: Post will forward these documents to IO and USUN via e-mail. End note.] When asked why Spain and Turkey were contesting the JIU seat, Cocher speculated that sometimes governments need to put forward individuals for internal political reasons, but that France is pushing for better European coordination on IO candidates. At this time, Post has no further information on Biraud's qualifications or suitability to continue serving on the JIU.

#### FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) COUNCIL

14. (SBU) Cocher took advantage of Poloff's visit to request U.S. support for the French candidate for the Independent President of the FAO Council, Luc Guyau, who is President of France's formal farmers' lobby, "the Permanent Assembly of the Chambers of Agriculture" (an organization roughly similar to the chambers of commerce, but for the agriculture and food sectors only), a member of France's Economic and Social Council, and a former Chairman of the influential National Federation of Farmers' Unions (FNSEA) from 1992 to 2001. Cocher described Guyau as somebody who understands farming, but is also well versed in international agriculture policy issues.

15. (SBU) France has already been active in lobbying support for Guyau, and Cocher estimates that 40 countries have indicated their support, but the race could be close with the U.K.'s current Council member, Victor Heard, also running (as is a candidate from the Gambia). Cocher admitted that it is not ideal to have French and U.K. candidates competing for the same seat and explained that Heard confirmed his candidacy at the last minute, well after France put forward Guyau's name, leaving little time for bilateral consultation or coordination. If they have not yet done so, we expect France will contact the Department formally requesting support for Guyau for this election, the vote for which Cocher believes will be in late November.

16. (SBU) Regarding Guyau's candidacy, our FAS office notes that during his recent bilateral visit to Washington, French Agricultural Minister Bruno Le Maire also lobbied for Guyau's bid with USDA Secretary Vilsack. Luc Guyau has repeatedly opposed U.S. policies on agricultural trade liberalization in favor of regional agricultural policies that would allow importing countries to establish trade barriers in order to protect their own agriculture producers. On management and leadership issues, we note that Luc Guyau, as well as other top members of FNSEA, was indicted in early 2000 for improper use of public money, but the court overturned the subsequent conviction in 2008 and cleared them for the lack of evidence. Our FAS also notes that Guyau's position at the top of the Chambers of Agriculture has often been criticized as the organizational and managerial reforms he had advocated before becoming President have not been realized. Mr. Guyau does not speak English.

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